RESEARCH PLAN PROPOSAL

Achievement-related Correlates of Flourishing: A Study on College Students

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INTRODUCTION:

It is estimated that between 30% and 40% of North American college students experience elevated psychological distress or mental disorder (Adlaf, Gliksman, Demers, & Newton-Taylor, 2001; Svanum & Zody,2001). Interestingly, evidence for an association between academic functioning and mental disorder among the general student body is limited. Svanum and Zody (2001) showed that, among a sample of 412 undergraduates, substance-related mental disorders were associated with lower grades, but that depressive disorders were not associated with lower grades and anxiety disorders were associated with higher grades. Even less is known about the association between mental health and academic functioning.

Keyes (2003, 2005, 2007) described a model of mental health in which mental health and mental disorder are two separate but related dimensions of functioning. Whereas the mental disorder dimension concerns the extent to which psychopathology is present or absent, the mental health dimension concerns the extent to which well-being is present or absent. Keyes (2003, 2005, 2007) operationalized positive mental health, or flourishing, as a combination of emotional well-being, psychological well-being, and social well-being. Building on the work of Diener (e.g., Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999), the assessment of emotional well-being emphasizes the presence of positive affect and life satisfaction. Building on the work of Ryff (1989; Ryff & Keyes,1995), the assessment of psychological well-being emphasizes a positive self-evaluation, including satisfaction with one's achievements and viewing oneself as having a purpose in life and growing as an individual. Building on the work of Keyes (1998), the assessment of social well-being emphasizes the quality of one's orientation toward others, including positive views of others and believing that one is making a contribution to one's community.

Keyes (2005) administered the three-scale subjective well-being measure to a national probability sample of 3032 US adults aged 25 years through 74 years. Respondents also participated in a computerized telephone-based clinical interview to yield diagnoses of depression, generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and alcohol dependence. Keyes 'diagnosed' the presence of flourishing, moderate mental health, and languishing by applying the polythetic approach employed in the DSM (e.g., DSM-IV-TR; American Psychiatric Association, 2000). Specifically, a diagnosis of flourishing required the presence of either high positive affect or high life satisfaction from the emotional well-being scale and the presence of high functioning on at least 6 of 11 indices of psychological and social well-being. Languishing was similarly diagnosed, except that low scores were required rather than high scores. Those not diagnosed as languishing or as flourishing were diagnosed as moderately mentally healthy. The prevalence of flourishing was 18.0%, the prevalence of languishing was 16.9%, and the prevalence of moderate mental health was 65.1%. Confirmatory factor analysis revealed that the best-fitting structure underlying correlations among emotional, psychological, and social well-being and symptoms of depression, generalized anxiety, panic disorder, and alcohol dependence was that of two separate but negatively correlated factors (r¼_0.53) corresponding to mental health and mental disorder. Reflecting this inverse relationship, those classified as flourishing had the lowest 12-month prevalence rates of disorder, those classified as languishing had the highest rates of psychopathology, and those categorized as moderately mentally healthy had rates between the flourishing and languishing groups. Similar findings emerged concerning rates of conduct disorder and depression as a function of mental health category in a follow-up study with a national sample of 1234 youths aged 12 years through 18 years (Keyes, 2006). Additional

measures included in the research described above are suggestive of important academic correlates of well-being. In the study of adults, Keyes (2005) included a brief goal formation measure and demonstrated that flourishing adults were more goal oriented in comparison to languishing or moderately mentally healthy adults. In the study of adolescents, Keyes (2006) included measures of truancy, satisfaction with school, and self-determination, and showed that flourishing adolescents, relative to languishing or moderately mentally healthy adolescents, reported being less truant, more involved in and satisfied with their school, and more self-determined (i.e., adopted goals that were internally rather than externally influenced). The current study sought to examine further the achievement-related correlates of the state of flourishing.

Implicit theories

According to Dweck (1999; Dweck, Chui, & Hong,1995; Molden & Dweck, 2006), an important individual difference variable associated with self-regulated learning and motivation is the manner in which one's personal attributes, such as ability, are conceptualized. Those who embrace an entity theory perceive attributes such as ability as relatively stable and unchangeable; that is, as trait-like or dispositional.
In contrast, those who hold an incremental theory view ability as malleable and open to influence; that is, as amenable to learning, growth, and development. Theory and evidence suggests that an incremental view of ability, relative to an entity view, is associated with adaptive cognitive and behavioral consequences. For example, incremental theorists adopt adaptive goal orientations and expend greater effort and persistence when confronted with adversity (Dweck & Leggett, 1988).

The adaptive characteristics of incremental beliefs suggest a positive association with well-being. There is, however, limited support for this hypothesis. Robins and Pals (2002) showed that incremental beliefs predict positive affect whereas entity beliefs predict negative affect (the absence of negative affect is often taken as an index of emotional well-being; e.g., Lucas, Diener, & Suh, 1996). Entity beliefs also predict negative emotional reactions after failure (Dweck, 1999). Personal (or subjective) control, as a more generalized conceptualization of the extent to which outcomes are viewed as controllable, is related to aspects of wellbeing (e.g., happiness, Larson, 1989, and well-being, Grob, Little, Wanner, Wearing, & Euronet, 1996; see Peterson, 1999, for a review of the broader literature on personal control and well-being).

VARIABLES OF THE STUDY:

A. FLOURISHING:

Dr Martin Seligman, regarded as the founder of Positive Psychology, coined the term "flourishing" to describe someone who has optimized their levels of well being. They experience positive emotions, enjoy healthy relationships and have high levels of engagement, meaning and purpose.

The Five Ingredients Necessary for Flourishing:

1-Positive Emotion: the experience of positive emotions such as happiness, satisfaction and joy and other good feelings and ways in which we can access those feelings.

2-Engagement: Also known as flow or "being in the zone." It is the experience of being fully immersed in an activity to the point where we lose sense of the passage of time, feel energized and seem to function better despite the extra effort.

3-Relationships: Positive relationships not only increase happiness but also buffer against stress. Skills to create, build and maintain positive relationships are essential.

4-Meaning and Purpose: Doing things that have a higher purpose or altruistic rationale can give meaning and purpose to daily life.

5-Accomplishment: There is much satisfaction to be gained from even small accomplishments. So a certain amount of goal oriented, task oriented activity allows that satisfaction to grow.

Subjective well-being (SWB) refers to how people experience the quality of their lives and includes both emotional reactions and cognitive judgments. SWB therefore encompasses moods and emotions as well as evaluations of one's satisfaction with general and specific areas of one's life. Concepts encompassed by SWB include positive and negative effect, happiness, and life satisfaction.

B. ACHIEVEMENT GOAL ORIENTATION:

Academic goal orientation is based on contemporary "goal-as-motives" theory where it is posited that "all actions are given meaning, direction, and purpose by the goals that individuals seek out, and that the quality and intensity of behavior will change as these goals change" (Covington, 2000, p. 174). Achievement goal theory is particularly important in education as it is believed that by differentially reinforcing some goals (and not others), teachers can influence (change) the reasons why students learn—that is, change their motivation.

C. PROCRASTINATION:

Procrastination refers to the act of replacing high-priority actions with tasks of lower priority, or doing something from which one derives enjoyment, and thus putting off important tasks to a later time. In accordance with Freud, the Pleasure principle may be responsible for procrastination; humans do not prefer negative emotions and handing off a stressful task until a further date is enjoyable. The concept that humans work best under pressure provides additional enjoyment and motivation to postponing a task. Procrastination may result in stress, a sense of

guilt and crisis, severe loss of personal productivity, as well as social disapproval for not meeting responsibilities or commitments.

D. SELF CONTROL:

Self control is the ability to control one's emotions, behavior, and desires in order to obtain some reward, or avoid some punishment, later. Presumably, some (smaller) reward or punishment is operating in the short term which precludes, or reduces, the later reward or punishment. Exerting self-control through the executive functions in decision making is held in some theories to deplete one's ability to do so in the future.

E. BELIEF PATTERNS:

Carol Dweck and others have identified two implicit theories :

Entity View – Entity theory view ability as stable and unchangeable, that is, as trait-like or dispositional.

Incremental View – Incremental theory view ability as malleable and open to influence; that is, as amenable to learning, growth, and development.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Research studies on Flourishing.

In a study done by Keyes CL in 2005 on America's youth on a sample of 1,234 youth ages 12-18. Flourishing was the most prevalent diagnosis among youth ages 12-14; moderate mental health was the most prevalent diagnosis among youth ages 15-18. Depressive symptoms decreased as mental health increased. Prevalence of conduct problems also decreased and measures of psychosocial functioning increased as mental health increased. Findings suggest the importance of positive mental health in future research on adolescent development.

Else Ouweneel et al conducted a longitudinal study on positive emotions, personal resources, and study engagement. The aim of this two-wave questionnaire study with a 4-week interval among 391 Dutch university students was to test a gain cycle of positive emotions, personal resources,

and study engagement. As a theoretical basis, this study drew on the broaden-and-build (B&B) theory and the conservation of resources (COR) theory. More specifically, it was hypothesized that the experience of positive emotions predicts students' future personal resources and study engagement. Moreover, it was expected that there is a longitudinal relationship between personal resources and study engagement. Results, obtained by means of structural equation modeling, confirmed both causal (except for the positive relationship between positive emotions and study engagement) and reciprocal hypotheses, thereby successfully integrating the B&B theory with the COR theory.

Nosratabadi, Masoud et al (2010) conducted a study on 424 (226 female, 198 male) Iranian students. This study aimed to explore the pattern in Iranian population. A sample of 424 (226 female, 198 male) students completed The Emotional Well-Being Scale (Keyes, 2002), Psychological Well-Being Scale (Ryff & Keyes, 1995), and Social Well-Being Scale (Keyes, 1998). Findings revealed that about 16% of students were flourishing, 20% were languishing, and 64% were relatively mentally healthy. No gender difference was found in the pattern of mental health.

Reschly, Amy L et al (2008) conducted a study on the contribution of positive emotions and coping to adolescents' engagement at school and with learning among 293 students in grades 7 to 10. Frequent positive emotions during school were associated with higher levels of student engagement and negative emotions with lower levels of engagement. Positive emotions, but not negative emotions, were associated with adaptive coping, which was then associated with student engagement. The association between positive emotions and engagement was partially mediated by adaptive coping. Results support the broaden and build theory and the role of positive emotions in students' engagement at school and with learning.

Andrew J Elliot conducted a study in 1997 on Avoidance Personal Goals and Subjective Well-Being among 166 university undergraduates in a psychology class (71 males, 95 females). This research comprises two studies designed to investigate both antecedents and consequences of pursuing avoidance personal goals over the course of a semester long period. Results revealed that neuroticism was positively related to the adoption of avoidance personal strivings (Study 1), and participants with low perceptions of their life skills were more likely to adopt avoidance personal projects (Study 2). Avoidance regulation proved deleterious to both retrospective and longitudinal subjective well-being, as participants with a greater proportion of avoidance goals reported lower SWB over the course of the semester and evidenced a decrease in SWB from the beginning to the end of the semester.

The study done by Dr. Meera Padhy et al in 2011 explored the intercorrelation between self esteem, subjective wellbeing and academic achievement of University students. Gender difference was also examined in self esteem and subjective wellbeing. The study used a simple two-group survey with a between-subjects design involving 120 participants. The results revealed that there was a significantly positive relation between self esteem, subjective wellbeing and academic achievement. Out of the eleven domains of subjective wellbeing, female students

were found to be significantly higher in transcendence, social support and deficiency in social contact than male students.

Pychyl T.A. and Little B.R. conducted a study in 1998 on personal goals in relation to subjective well-being. Two studies were conducted. In the first, 19 doctoral candidates were interviewed with respect to their personal projects. Using a grounded-theory approach to the interview transcripts, 11 context-specific dimensions were identified: time pressure, time conflict, procrastination, anxiety, guilt, financial stress, uncertainty, social support, passion, commitment and positive effects on mood. These dimensions were then used in a second study of 81 doctoral students who completed a questionnaire package including: Personal Projects Analysis (PPA), the NEO Personality Inventory, and SWB measures. Regression analyses revealed that the context-specific PPA dimensions identified in Study 1 accounted for unique variance in perceptions of life satisfaction and provided a more detailed perspective on doctoral students' stress and coping resources.

Zhao, Shu-yuan et al (2011) conducted a study on Subjective well-being of senior high school students and its relationship to school-work achievement. The questionnaire about the sense of adolescents' SWB was applied to 943 senior high school students. There was significant difference between students in various grades; Female students' level of family satisfaction and friend satisfaction was higher than male students', but male students' SWB of school-work achievement was higher than female students'. The level of SWB of students who did well in school-work achievement was the highest of all. There was significant difference between students in various grades.

Casas, Ferran et al (2004) conducted a study on Subjective Well-Being, Values and Goal Achievement among 968 Spanish adolescents aged 12 to 16. Results clearly confirm a positive relation between satisfaction with life domains and overall satisfaction with life. Satisfaction with life as a whole shows also to be positively correlated with non-materialistic values. Perceived control shows to be a key construct to understand both life-satisfaction of adolescents and their behavioral intentions to plan or not to plan their action to fulfill intended goals. Subjects reporting to rely on chance when searching information show higher external perceived control while respondents who prefer to plan show higher internal perceived control. The more satisfaction expressed with learning related items, with family and with life as a whole, the more tendencies are observed among the respondents to plan their search.

Research studies on Achievement goal orientation.

Heta Tuominen-Soini et al (2006) conducted a study on achievement goal orientations and subjective well-being among six groups of students with unique motivational profiles. Observed differences in subjective well-being indicated that goals related to self-improvement and growth were positively associated with various indices of well-being, whereas avoidance tendencies and concerns with validating or demonstrating one's competence were linked with different types of

adjustment problems. Findings demonstrate the importance of including measures of well-being when evaluating the role of achievement goal orientations in learning and achievement.

The study conducted by Avi Kaplan and and Martin L. Maehr in 1999 is concerned with the role that achievement goals may play in facilitating the psychological well-being of students. It was found that Task goals and perception of the school as emphasizing task goals were related to positive psychological well-being, and ego goals and perceiving the school as emphasizing ego goals were related to negative psychological well-being. This pattern was found for both African American and Euro-American students.

Y. Ommundsen' and B. H. Pedersen (1999) conducted a study on 136 young athletes aged 13 to 18 years involved in organized sport within a community in northern Norway. The findings suggest that being task oriented in sport as well as having a sense of being competent are important in order to prevent sport competitions giving rise to elevated cognitive anxiety in young athletes.

Coutinho, Savia Antonette (2007) conducted a study on achievement goal orientation, learning style, and self-efficacy among students. Structural equation modeling was used to test a model integrating achievement goal orientation, learning style, self-efficacy, and metacognition into a single framework that could explain and predict variation in performance. Self-efficacy was the strongest predictor of performance, followed by metacognition. Achievement goals correlated with each other, suggesting that students may be adopting multiple goals at the same time. Goal orientation was related to two or three learning styles, which may imply that students have a primary learning style and adopt a secondary or tertiary learning style to achieve their goals. Achievement goals, self-efficacy, and learning style had weak, negative relationships with metacognition.

The study done by Zhu, Xiao-bin et al (2011) explored the characteristics and relationships of achievement goal orientation, academic social comparison and academic self-efficacy of 343 middle school students and were assessed by "Achievement Goal Orientation Scale", "Social Comparison Scale" and "Academic Self-efficacy Scale". In the way of comparison, boys used more down-comparison than girls, and in the results of comparison, boys had lower scores on self-improvement than girls and students with higher academic achievement used more mastery approach goal orientation and mastery avoidance goal orientation. Students with higher academic achievement used more upward-comparison and parallel-comparison, while students with poorer academic achievement tended to use downward-comparison and influence of achievement goal orientation on academic self-efficacy was partly mediated by academic social comparison.

Research studies on Procrastination:

Ozer, Bilge Uzun and Ferrari, Joseph R (2011) conducted a study on Gender orientation and academic procrastination among Turkish adolescents (115 females, 99 males). Students completed self-report measures of academic procrastination and sex roles. Factor analysis yielded four excuses for procrastination reported by students, namely; perfectionism, aversiveness of task, rebellion against control and risk taking. Further analysis a revealed significant main effect for gender roles on academic procrastination excuses. Specifically,

Turkish adolescents with undifferentiated gender roles explained their reasons for academic procrastination more than adolescents with masculine gender-role because of the task aversiveness. Also, Turkish adolescents with undifferentiated gender-role orientation claimed the excuse of risk-taking for their academic procrastination, more than adolescents with femininity and androgynous gender-role.

Rosario, Pedro et al (2009) conducted a study on academic procrastination associated with personal, school, and family variables. Two independent samples of 580 and 809 seventh to ninth graders, students attending the last three years of Portuguese Compulsory Education were taken. The findings, similar in both studies, reveal that procrastination decreases when the parents' education is higher, but it increases along with the number of siblings, the grade level, and the underachievement.

Davis, John K (2001) conducted a study on effects of culture on high school academic procrastination among 284 (101 Hispanic, 98 Caucasian and 85 African-American) high school students. Subjects were measured through the use of several validated instruments for procrastination, achievement motivation, cultural identity, socio-economic status and several other factors. Path analytical statistics were used to gauge the influence the research variables had on one another and on procrastination. The findings suggest that procrastination among the study subjects is primarily a function social status, parenting style and the manner in which students perceive the fairness and opportunity offered by social institutions.

Laura J Solomon, Esther D Rothblum (1984) conducted a study on academic procrastination and the reasons for procrastination behavior among 342 college students. Results indicate that procrastination is not solely a deficit in study habits or time management, but involves a complex interaction of behavioral, cognitive, and affective components.

P Steel et al (2001) conducted a study on procrastination and personality, performance, and mood among 152 undergraduates who were measured at six time periods during an 11-week introductory psychology course. The course consisted of a computer-administered personalized system of instruction, a system noted for susceptibility to procrastination. Results show that procrastination is an excellent predictor of performance, though some final-hour catching-up is possible. Efforts to clarify its causes were mixed. Procrastination does reflect an excessive discrepancy between work intentions and work actions, as procrastinators tend to have a larger than average intention-action gap, especially at the beginning of the course.

Research studies on Self-control:

Mark Muraven (2009) conducted a study on Building Self-Control Strength among 92 adults. Self-control capacity was assessed using the stop signal paradigm before they started practicing self-control and again at the end of 2 weeks. Participants who practiced self-control by cutting back on sweets or squeezing a handgrip exhibited significant improvement in stop signal performance relative to those who practiced tasks that did not require self-control. Participants who did not practice self-control believed that the tasks should improved self-control, engaged in tasks that were effortful and made self-control salient, but did not actually require self-control.

Hongjiao et al (2004) conducted a study on self-control ability among 885 Shanghai middle school students. The results showed: 1. The Middle School Student's Self-control Ability Questionnaire consists of three parts, namely, the control over emotion, the control over behavior, and the control over thinking process; 2. There were high reliability and validity about the questionnaire; 3. There was a normal distribution of self-control ability among middle school students; 4. The differences of self-control ability were significant in grade and sex; 5. their development of self-control ability was not stable with some fluctuation.

Zhang, Lingcong (2002) conducted a study on the anti-interference performance of junior high school students with different self-control abilities. Subjects were 60 junior high school students with high or low self-control abilities according to the results of an assessment using the Scale of Self-Control in Learning for Junior School Students and were asked to complete simple and complex tasks under or not under interference or under internal or external interference on the computer. After the 30-min task performance, Ss were asked to answer 2 questions about performance attitudes and the reasons. The results show that different self-control abilities of junior high school students only influenced simple task performances under interference and that junior high school students' task performances were easily disturbed by interference.

Kuhnle, Claudia et al (2010) conducted a study on relationship of value orientations, self-control, frequency of school-leisure conflicts, and life-balance in adolescence among 817 German 8th graders. The results suggest that fostering self-control can be a promising approach to decrease the frequency of goal conflicts, and thus increase students' experience of life-balance.

McClure, Robert F (1986) conducted a study on self control and achievement motivation in young and old subjects. 626 high school students (average age approximately 16 yrs) and 179 older Ss (average age approximately 46 yrs), matched for intellectual efficiency. Subjects completed several personality measures from the California Personality Inventory, including the Intellectual Efficiency, Self-Control, and Achievement-Independence scales. Results indicate that older subjects were higher in achievement motivation and self-control yet had lower reported grades than younger subjects.

METHODOLOGY:

RATIONALE:

It is estimated that between 30% and 40% of college students experience elevated psychological distress or mental disorder (Adlaf, Gliksman, Demers, & Newton-Taylor, 2001; Svanum & Zody, 2001). Interestingly, evidence for an association between academic functioning and mental disorder among the general student body is limited. Svanum and Zody (2001) showed that, among a sample of 412 undergraduates, substance-related mental disorders were associated with lower grades, but that depressive disorders were not associated with lower grades and anxiety disorders were associated

with higher grades. Even less is known about the association between mental health and academic functioning.

No study to date has systematically examined associations between an overall measure of well-being and indices of achievement-related self-regulation. This study proposes to examine whether well-being among college students predicts a pattern of cognitive and behavioral processes reflective of self-regulated learning.

IMPLICATION:

Like positive affect, the more encompassing state of flourishing may enhance levels of awareness and interest within the learner, such that opportunities and possibilities are considered and sought that would otherwise go undetected. The pursuit of such opportunities may promote further development of skills and abilities which in turn enhance future functioning.
These strategies (e.g., positive expectancies, interest, creativity, persistence) may then form part of the skill repertoire of such students for future assignments.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES:

The main aim of the study was to see if well-being among college students predict a pattern of cognitive and behavioral processes reflective of self regulated learning. More specifically the objectives of the study are as follow:

- To investigate the relationship between well-being and the belief patterns.
- To study the relationship between well-being and achievement goal orientation
- To explore the relationship between well-being and procrastination
- To investigate the relationship between well-being and self-control
- To study the relationship between well being and self-reported grades

HYPOTHESES:

To fulfill the above objective, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

- Well-being will be positively and significantly related to increment belief and negatively and significantly related to entity belief.
- Well-being will be positively and significantly related to mastery-approach orientation.
- Well-being will be negatively and significantly related to procrastination.
- Well-being will be positively and significantly related to self-control.

- Well-being will be positively and significantly related to higher self-reported grade.
- Well-being will significantly contribute to predict the variables of the study viz. belief pattern, achievement goal orientation, procrastination, self-control and grades.

SAMPLE OF THE STUDY:

The sample of the study will consist of 200 final year college students from faculty of arts, science and commerce drawn from private and deemed universities in the city of Jaipur which follow semester pattern at the Undergraduate level. The sample will be selected based on the following criteria of inclusion and omission.

Criteria of inclusion:

- Age group will be between 19-21 years.
- All subjects will be from the final year of their respective undergraduate program.
- Subjects will be drawn from arts, science and commerce faculty.
- All subjects will belong to upper middle and upper class.

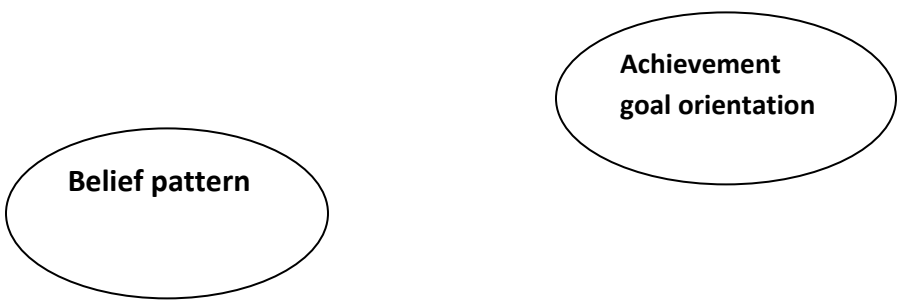
Criteria of omission:

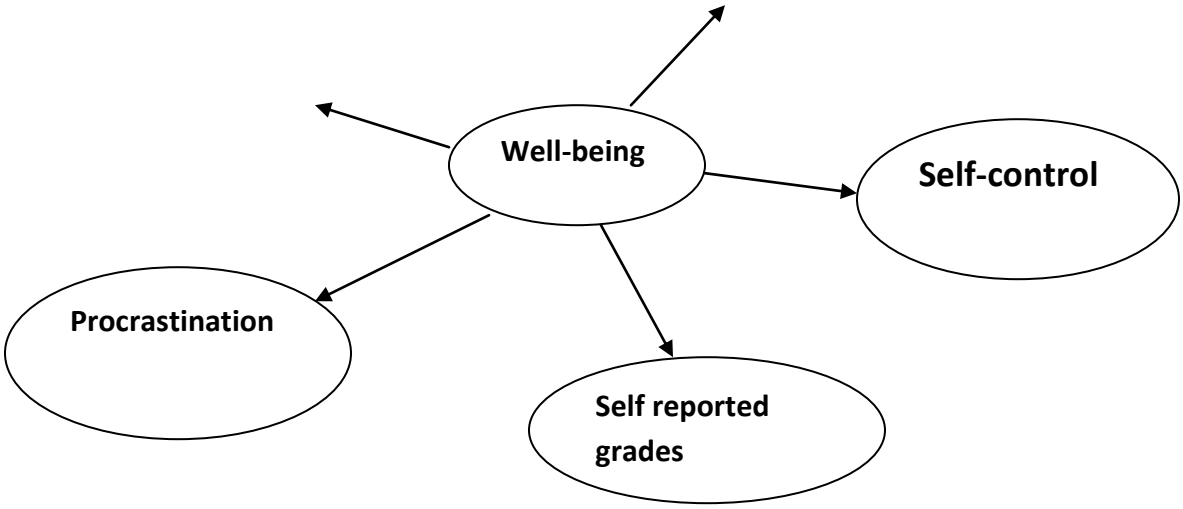
- All students studying in Government and constituent colleges of the state university
- Students studying in annual scheme
- Students enrolled in professional courses.
- Dropouts of previous years
- Students suffering from psychological ailments and physical disability

Purposive sampling of non probability type will be employed to select the sample.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY:

The design of the study will be the correlational research design.





MEASURES OF THE STUDY:

- Subjective well-being scale (Keyes', 2005)
- Domain general measure of implicit theories (Dweck, 1999)
- Achievement Goal Questionnaire (Elliot & McGregor, 2001)
- Procrastination scale (Tuckman, 1991)
- Self-control measure (Tangney et al, 2004)

PROCEDURE:

The study will be conducted in two phases. In the first phase, sample of 200 final year college students (100 boys and 100 girls) will be selected according to the criteria of inclusion and omission of the study using purposive sampling technique. In the second phase, the measures of the study will be administered to the subjects in random order.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS:

- Mean
- Standard deviation
- Pearson correlation

- Regression analysis
- Other relevant higher statistical measure

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY:

- Due to the correlational nature of the study, cause and effect relationship will not be explored.
- The study will be limited due to time restrictions and therefore confined only to 200 cases.
- Only objective tests will be used in the study without supplementing them with data obtained by using some projective measures.

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